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COMMON SENSE IN FOREIGN POLICY¹

NEUTRALITY is an official matter, a policy that governments alone can assume. If an individual has any power of thought or any feeling of sympathy, he cannot be neutral. What he claims as "neutrality" is really indifference or ignorance or something worse. When he declares that such is his attitude, consciously or unconsciously he is stating an untruth, thereby trying either to deceive himself or to mislead others.

In bringing the judicious mind to bear on the problems which led up to the present war, on those it has engendered and those it will produce, what is needed is not vague assertions of "neutrality," not the wild credulousness of partisanship and not the singular irrationality of emotionalism. Instead, the essential qualities called for are plain common sense, united with an ordinary spirit of fairness and tolerance to those with whom one may differ.

Apart from divergence of views about the respective belligerents, and about what ought to be done to or for them, the war has brought to the people of the United States as never before an idea of the tremendous contrast between war and peace as conditions of human existence. How to avoid the one and maintain the other engross thought as nothing else can do. Those who seek to give expression to their convictions on the matter may be divided into three classes. To the first belong the non-resistants who have conscientious scruples against a resort to arms. In the second category are numbered the advocates of "preparedness," who believe in an accumulation of means of defense against a possible foe, just as the prudent householder insures his house against a fire that may never come. Third in order are those who seek to remove the causes of war, or at least to reduce its possible causes to a minimum.

While it is conceivable that a "pacifist," so-called, might belong to any one of these three classes, his proper place is with the last; for he is not one who would either submit or oppose, but one who would prevent. Just as in the realm of medical research the great aim is to forestall a physical evil, instead of striving to cure it after it has appeared, so in dealing with the diseases of nations and peoples the great object of the "pacifist," rightly understood, is to provide against

¹ See note 2, p. 124.

the coming of the malady of war. This is not a case of "discretion" surrendering to superior odds; nor is it one of "precaution" amassing armaments liable to make the potential, if unknown, antagonist pile up still larger ones, and to make little states imitate the action of their big neighbors in the vain hope of contending successfully against such "defensive" measures when, perchance, they become "offensive." The seekers after "preparedness," indeed, too often fail to understand that the vision of the insider is not the viewpoint of the outsider. What seems a means of defense to the one may well appear an act of offense to the other. The line between the measures is apt to be as close as laughter is to tears. Neither "discretion" nor "precaution" of the sort mentioned avails in reason against the prophylaxis of a common sense, the sole effect of which would be to keep a danger from arising.

The spectacle, moreover, of entire peoples fighting for selfish objects that each attributes to the other, or for noble purposes that each denies to the other, has about it an abnormality which, were it not so tragic, might be ridiculous. Under such conditions neither in logic nor in ethics is it possible precisely to determine which is right and which is wrong. If to this state of absurdity be added the circumstance that the soldiers doing the actual fighting are personally unacquainted with their antagonists, and hence can have no personal grudge to settle, and the further fact that the individuals chiefly responsible for provoking the struggle, and for whetting the hatred that makes it continue, are civilians who use tongue and pen but never sword or gun, the irrationality of the whole procedure is all too clear. Common sense condemns it, and demands that means be sought to prevent the recurrence of exhibitions so degrading to the intelligence of the human race.

Looking at the question from still another angle, if war as an agency for the supposed adjustment of international disputes is ever to be abolished, the patent, practical truth demonstrated by the present war is that the attainment of so desirable an end cannot be reached until the causes of it are understood and removed at their inception. Here the risk of easy judgments comes to the fore. Difficult as the historian finds it even approximately to show what provoked the relatively petty wars of the past, the fact does not deter many a wiseacre today from proving incontestably—to his own satisfaction—just who and what were responsible for a struggle that involves the world and all mankind. "Everyman his own historian, and forsooth his own international lawyer," is apparently the situation that has arisen; and the merit of his conclusions, be it said, stands in a sort of inverse proportion to the

magnitude of the conflict itself. The simpler the cause adduced, the readier the panacea proposed, seems to be the corollary that follows. To the larger aspects of the matter, to the depth and spread of its multifarious ramifications, few give proper heed ; but when they speak, theirs is the voice of common sense.

That the vast issues underlying the present war had been apprehended and the perils certain to arise, unless these issues were adjusted by peaceful means, had been pointed out, is a fact amply proven by the number of books and articles, speeches and journalistic utterances which preceded the cataclysm. But they cried aloud in vain. Men would not hear them. Europe at large had been at peace for a century. In that time what is called "civilization" presumably had advanced too far to admit of the possibility that war on the scale of a world conflict could ever arise again. A large army or a large navy was simply a police force to keep the peoples of Europe civil to one another, or was useful in gaining power over other folk elsewhere. Those who talked of the possibility of war, therefore, were so many modern Cassandras, or less politely, "jingo," and those who dwelt upon the possibility of removing the causes of war were "chimerachasers" who should be treated with indifference, if not with derision or contempt. In the spirit of the fatuous belief that a huge ocean-liner was unsinkable, so a world war, simply, was unthinkable.

Some of the writers and speakers on the theme undoubtedly were persons of just the types in question. Others, not delighting in sensationalism or in mere ideology, were mindful of the lessons of history, mindful of the truth that, despite the advance in "civilization," human nature has not been greatly altered, mindful also of the evidence that "civilization" itself often has been promoted by war. They pleaded that, in the interest of peace, the facts be squarely faced and that measures be honestly taken to prevent their logical consequences from coming into operation. Eminent among these advocates was the famous English publicist Sir Harry Johnston,¹ whose little treatise, *Common Sense in Foreign Policy*,² deserves a foremost place in the literature of a subject that as yet has but a small bibliography.

¹ Sir Harry Hamilton Johnston, G. C. M. G., K. C. B., D. Sc., probably the greatest living English authority on Africa, has held many offices in the British colonial service, and is the author of numerous works on geography, history, politics, economics, biology and sociology. Few are so well equipped by knowledge and training as he to discuss the topic under consideration.

² *Common Sense in Foreign Policy*. By Sir Harry Johnston. New York, E. P. Dutton and Company, 1913; x, 119 p.

When the work appeared, early in 1913, it aroused no particular interest. Newspapers and magazines noticed it as a sort of "pacifist" document that seemed a bit out of the ordinary. But as the world moved on in its happy-go-lucky way, serenely conscious of a century of buying and selling, of living and dying, in a sedately normal fashion, with only an occasional localized war to create the relish of a diversion, even the practical suggestions of a little book that would not take long to read were passed over and forgotten.

Since the "unthinkable" has happened, and has assumed a form that eighteen months ago would have been deemed equally "unthinkable," the content of *Common Sense in Foreign Policy* has taken on a meaning which even its author might not have believed possible. Instead of being an example of warning and advice, with just a glint of prophecy, it has become in several respects a prophecy likely to be fulfilled. Perhaps the writer had the prescient vision of the seer; perhaps he spoke more truly than he imagined.

Though one may not agree with many of the viewpoints and recommendations laid down in the work, the honesty and sincerity pervading them are unmistakable. Whether the author of them feels now as he wrote then is altogether dubious. It is difficult, if not impossible, to be judicious-minded when one's country is at war, at a time when passion and emotion sweep reason to the winds. However this may be, the book certainly has a value out of all proportion to its size, and it merits careful examination.

Sir Harry Johnston is an "imperialist" in the best meaning of that word. He pleads for the "promotion of peace and goodwill among white nations . . . and, when the ambitions and the allotment of spheres of influence amongst the Caucasian peoples has been nicely adjusted," for an observance of the duty "to see that the educational task of the Caucasian is carried out in a right, a Christian, a practical and sympathetic fashion towards the other races and sub-species of humanity," who thus may be enabled in the course of time to attain "positions of equality with the Caucasian nations in the Confederation of the World" (page vi). Were he not convinced of the obligations and privileges of the white man in this respect, convinced that the results to be accomplished were "in the long run a blessing to undeveloped countries and the beginning of a new and happier history among the coloured peoples," he would not, in his map-making and theorizing, "have made so free with the waste places of the earth" (page vii). To this end, "what we white peoples ought to strive for, with speech and pen," he declares, "is unity of purpose; an

alliance throughout all the world in this final struggle for mastery. . . . We ought to adjust our ambitions and eliminate causes of conflict" (page vii). These last four words afford the keynote to the entire work, the essential feature of a common-sense relationship among nations, the prophylaxis that would be the greatest boon to humanity.

In elaborating the ways and means by which this result might be accomplished, the author never loses sight of the fact that he is a British imperialist, and withal a free-trader, who believes heart and soul in the omnipotently civilizing mission of his country. His dominant motif indeed consists in pointing out how the British Empire may assist or retard what he forecasts or recommends, and how that realm would be affected by a redistribution of territories in the world at large. Nowhere does he suggest that Great Britain relinquish one jot or one tittle of what she holds in virtue of possession, except for a full compensation elsewhere. The other European powers, instead, are to do that. Nor is he especially careful about confining the "waste places of the earth" to regions outside of Europe, or inhabited wholly by "coloured peoples." What international mankind needs for its greatest good is, in his opinion, a territorial readjustment at the expense, or to the advantage, of countries other than Great Britain, but in no case diminishing the dominion, the prestige and the security of the greatest of colonial powers itself. The suggestion, however, which at first blush seems a bit naive—to put it mildly—is not accompanied by any hint at the desirability of actually enlarging British territory, except at minor points. Given the British *status quo*, everything else ought to be susceptible of accomplishment, if the other nations will only agree to a world-wide system of partition and exchange, carried on amicably under the ægis of British approval.

This attitude of constant insistence upon the preservation of the British Empire intact, this belief in the mission of Great Britain as the paramount civilizer, as the august supervisor of international adjustments, in all fairness to the author it should be said, is not indicative of a bumptious national self-complacency or of an inordinate notion, on his part, of British impeccability or superiority. It is also true, nevertheless, that the author might have criticised to advantage something more in his own country than the methods of making appointments to the foreign service, might even have found there much the same fault that he discovers in other lands, particularly in France and the United States. Indeed the candor with which, for example, he alludes to certain defects in France, Russia and other nations now allies of Great Britain, and the generosity with which he treats Germany, now so

anathematized as an enemy, are characteristics that lend piquancy to his text and mark his desire at the time to be just, tolerant and scientific-minded.

The work consists of eight chapters, of which the last, dealing with certain improvements needed in the administration of the British foreign service, is of comparatively small importance. On the other hand, the preceding seven chapters devoted to the foreign policy of Great Britain in general, and to a specific examination of its relations with France, Germany and Austria-Hungary, Russia, Portugal, and the United States, and to the disposal of the Far East and Near East, offer tempting inducements to discussion, all the more so in view of a series of graphic and instructive maps inserted in opportune places. Though admittedly never seen before of mortal geographer, these maps constitute a set of pictorial essays on a possible futurity which have a speculative fascination of their own, quite apart from the admirable service they render in illustrating the text.

In the initial chapter on the foreign policy of the British Empire attention is directed to the healthy growth of popular interest, and of publicity, in concerns lying beyond the bounds of Great Britain. No small share in contributing to this result has come from the insistence of the self-governing dominions that the "Old Lady of Downing Street" shall not "make an ass of herself" by going to war for idle reasons. "The nation of the United Kingdom," furthermore, "refuses any longer to be bound by treaties, concluded secretly, as to which its elected legislature has not been consulted and which it has not ratified" (page 8). The sentence is certainly significant enough in view of what has happened since. Yet despite this arousing of interest in foreign affairs, there has been little attempt so far to coördinate national desires and ambitions, to realize what is wanted, in the imperial sense, how it is to be obtained, and how it may be possible to preserve from molestation or encroachment the great fields of adventure already "marked off on the map" as British territory, or as eventual spheres of influence. Assuming that the qualities which have made the British Empire what it is continue to exist, wisdom in foreign policy demands, not only that the British "keep abreast of the times in intelligence, education and physical well-being" (page 10), but that they take into due consideration the interests of other nations. In that case, besides removing from rivals an impulse to attack, they might well become "the focus of a Confederation of the World."

Apart from these general considerations, it seems manifest that the existing advantage in sea-power, both naval and mercantile, must be

upheld, if the British Empire is to continue in unimpaired strength. This can be maintained only by "keeping ahead of any probable combination of other powers which would result in an aggregation of wealth and labour force" sufficient to inflict defeat. "Improbable combinations" of the sort, furthermore, are not likely to be formed, so long as the principle of free trade or a moderate tariff is observed.

"The greatest of British interests is peace," and the main motive of British policy is to guide the process of imperial development "along paths of progress without recourse to war, least of all war with any combination of European rivals powerful enough to make the issue of the struggle uncertain and victory disastrously costly" (page 14). In this connection Britain has to remember that its "resources in fighting men of first class value are limited. Money cannot necessarily buy either courage or military training." The British navy counts for something like two-thirds of the "factors of defence and attack," but it cannot accomplish everything. Before the British nation and its self-governing dominions go to war, therefore, they must be sure that the issue is a justifiable one.

Of the multitude of conceivable grievances, on the basis of which war might be declared, only eleven, in the author's judgment, are "worth fighting for or against." These he enumerates as follows :

1. Any attempt which is not endorsed by the Dutch people to include Holland within the limits of the German Empire.

2. Any attempt, under any conditions whatever, on the part of Germany, to control the mouth of the Scheldt ; or any fortification of the mouth of the Scheldt by Holland, acting under the influence of Germany, which would lock up Antwerp and interfere with its free access to the North Sea.

3. The territorial integrity, complete independence, and neutrality of Belgium and of the Grand-Duchy of Luxemburg.

4. Any unprovoked attack on France, or any further annexation of territory by Germany in eastern or northern France.

5. Any further diminution of Danish territory, or an attack on the independence of Denmark which is equally opposed by Norway and Sweden.

6. Any interference by another power with Egypt or Sinai, with the British sphere in Arabia, or with the independence and neutrality of all the rest of Arabia between the bay of Al-Kuweit and the Gulf of Akabah.

7. The establishment of any other European Power than Great Britain in control of Southern Persia east of Bandar Dilam.

8. Any similar attempt to interpose a foreign influence in Siam west of the Menam River and the Gulf of Siam.

9. Any interference with the independence of China Proper which might upset the conditions of trade and enterprise to the marked detriment of

the British Empire—that is to say, any interference with perfectly free-trade conditions in China which would give any foreign Power a commercial advantage in that Empire over other nations ; similarly, the interference of any other European Power in the affairs of Tibet (it is provided, of course, that Tibet remains like the rest of the Chinese Empire, a free-trade area).

10. Any attempt of the United States to exercise peculiar political or commercial privileges in South America, east of the Panama Canal zone, and in general any attempt on the part of an outside Power to interfere with the independence of the South American republics ; or a disposition on the part of any South American State to confer peculiar privileges in commerce on the subjects of any foreign Power to the detriment of the free-trade principle.

11. And, of course, any attack on the territories included within the acknowledged scope of the British Empire [pages 15-16].

In this catalogue of *casūs belli* two items call for especial attention. One is the significant fact that, of the nations that might war with Great Britain, only two are directly mentioned, viz., Germany and the United States, her two chief commercial rivals. Indeed all of the first five items, nearly half the entire number, have Germany in view. That only the sixth, seventh and ninth allude to Russia, that the eighth refers to France, and the ninth also to Japan, furnish eloquent evidence of how the British international attitude has changed since 1899, when the Anglo-German naval race began.

The other item of particular interest is the connection of these motives for war with the present struggle. In the first five on the list local self-defense looms large and imperative. Clearly do they emphasize the fact that Great Britain can afford to permit no change whatever in the *status quo* of areas adjacent to her on the continent, south and southeastward. Here also the chief center of concern is Belgium ; but neither at this point nor elsewhere (pages 32, 39, 46, 61) is the inviolability of that country demanded for any reason other than what is suggested by the need of a positive local security, of a bulwark of defense, for its island neighbor. That was the reason why, under the direction of British diplomacy, it was created an independent state and then neutralized, originally as a safeguard against France, later constructively to become one against Germany. Such an attitude of self-protection is entirely justifiable and honorable from the standpoint of any self-respecting nation, so long at least as the countries of the world remain organized on a militaristic basis, whether on sea or on land. To claim, therefore, as has since been done, that Great

Britain entered the war, solely or even mainly, if indeed at all, to protect "poor little Belgium," or to "uphold the sanctity of treaties," is an assertion of righteousness which may find easy refutation in similar cases on many a page of her own imperial history.

Despite her numerous faults (pages 19-27), France ought to receive the support of Great Britain in the "maintenance of her position as the only ruling power in North Africa between the Atlantic coast of Morocco and the frontiers of Tripoli" (page 27), and that for reasons alike of sentimental import, of fitness to govern, and of British colonial interest. The French Congo, on the other hand, must be regarded as "a region of Africa destined to belong to the German Empire" (page 30), partly because it is now "almost entirely detached from actual contact with the French Sudan," and partly because it might be exchanged to advantage for Metz and French Lorraine. Germany, it seems, has tried to gain possession of the region "and a few other things besides, without giving anything in return"; and had France yielded too much in this direction during the crisis of 1911, "she could have placed no further barrier in the way of further German encroachment, until at last Britain would have suffered from her yielding."

Germany, however, has something to say on her own behalf. She complains that France, not merely opposes "the full satisfaction of German land-hunger in West-central Africa, but she puts many spokes between German wheels in the Near East." She "refuses to Germany a third place in the direction of Turkish finance."

In addition (it is well known though not admitted) every effort during the past ten years has been put forth on the part of French diplomacy to obstruct German ambitions in the Near East. Repeatedly France has sought to bring about a Russian interposition in the Balkans: either to prevent the growth of friendship between Serbia and Austria; or an understanding between Austria, Germany, and Bulgaria; or any autonomy in Turkish administration which might pave the way for the disappearance of Ottoman power from Europe and the allotment of the Turkish dominions west of the Hellespont to a Balkan confederation, too likely to be eventually allied with Austria and Germany. France has blocked the Baghdad Railway (politically though not financially) wherever and whenever she was able.

All this seems very churlish to the German [pages 30-31].

The motive for the attitude of France may proceed in a measure from the circumstance that "each nation must frame its policy on selfish lines, if it is to exist and prosper"; but the author is more dis-

posed to believe that the whole trouble arose from Germany "being a little too drastic, a little too greedy, in 1871, when she took the region west of the little Seille River including Metz, where the speech has been French almost from the time of Charlemagne." Here Sir Harry Johnston admits that Metz was "once an Imperial City" and hence German; but he sets the admission quite aside by declaring that "France likewise was once a German kingdom"—an asseveration not likely to find favor among the present school of "*omnis Gallia*" French historians! They would be apt, however, to support stoutly his contention that the seizure of Metz by France in 1551 was justifiable "because it followed the range of French speech." In this regard it might be interesting to know whether such was contemporary French opinion on the matter, particularly as expressed by Henry II himself, and whether it might be made a general principle applicable today to areas speaking languages altogether different from those of their European possessors. But of course what is proper for Europeans and their descendants as empire-builders cannot be held good of "coloured peoples." On the other hand, to say that the "small portion of French Lorraine," including the "threatening fortress of Metz," represents a "strategical projection of Germany into France, which is a perpetual menace to French security" (page 31), is altogether plausible—at least from a French viewpoint—whatever may be said of its defensive value to German security.

Were this area to be given back to France, and the neighboring Grand Duchy of Luxemburg to be cut loose entirely from the German Customs Union, and rendered both neutral and independent, the action would have several desirable consequences. It would compel "an abandonment of all German ambition to overrun and incorporate Belgium within the future limits of the German Empire," make France "comparatively safe from an overwhelming surprise attack on the part of Germany," enable her to "turn her thoughts and ambitions southwards across the Mediterranean to the full development of French Africa," give Germany the French Congo, and lead to a recognition also on the part of France that "Germany has strong claims to a predominant partnership in the administration of the Turkish Empire" (page 32).

Regarding the British attitude in the matter, so essential would be the gain to Great Britain "in the assurance that Belgium was safe from a German attack and outside the scope of Pan-Germanist ambitions," that she "might do much to facilitate arrangements" between Germany and France in reference to the Nearer East.

A German occupation of Belgium would be followed by a German acquisition of Picardy and a deliberate attempt to push Britain on one side. Successful in this, the Germans could conquer us at leisure or, at any rate, ruin the position of our country as an Imperial Power. Any further German interference with Luxemburg would be so obviously actuated by the desire to injure France and facilitate the entry into Belgium, that it likewise would have to be resisted as an attack almost on our own frontier. Naturally, likewise, it would be a national necessity to assist France with all our strength, if she were attacked by Germany without a cause.

But the fate of Alsace and German Lorraine is no business of ours, and we could not make it too clear to France that we would never pledge our support to any war of aggression against Germany for the recovery of those provinces. . . .

We must not follow at her heels, if she incited Russia to attack Germany or Austria for the furthering of French projects. . . .

France has considerable claims . . . to a protectorate over Syria, between Damascus and Hamah, without prejudice to the Jewish state which will some day be founded in the Holy Land. But there is no other direction in which French business, commerce, or past sacrifices entitle France to a further share in the derelict Turkish Empire [pages 32-33].

“When the final settlement of the Eastern Question averts Armageddon [!] and brings Europe a step nearer to confederation,” France might well afford to display two “proofs of her friendly understanding with the British Empire.” These would have to do with stopping the shipment, through French territories, or by virtue of French treaty rights in Africa and Arabia, of arms and ammunition to be used against British subjects. Doubtless the British themselves have not by any means been free from blame in this “treachery between white nations,” but it is time that the states of Europe “made common cause against barbarism and ceased to secure sneaking profits out of each other’s difficulties” [page 35].

One point we must not overlook in our calculated friendships, and that is the renewed vigour of France. . . . She . . . never may be . . . in a position to attack Germany . . . but she is certainly able to resist German aggression to a degree which may well cause that Power to hesitate to provoke a war. The Italian alliance with Germany and Austria will not outlive the final settlement of Eastern affairs. It has again been renewed, owing to the tactical mistake of France, seeming . . . to back up a Russian interference, under Servian guise, in the Balkan Peninsula. But when France withdraws from the useless and unprofitable Russian Alliance, Italy and Spain will gravitate toward her instead; and a Latin Confederation, which may not impossibly secure the adhesion of Britain, Por-

tugal and Greece, will be a quite sufficient makeweight against that *Central European Alliance of Germany, Austria, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, the Balkan kingdoms, and Turkey, which will probably be the great political achievement of the twentieth century*¹ [pages 35-36].

With this extraordinary flight of prophecy the author rises to the culminating point of his entire work—the relations of Great Britain and Germany. The discussion of them he prefaces by remarking that, contrary to the situation in the case of France, the circumstances, ethnic and historical, which might seem naturally to make Great Britain and Germany friends (pages 37-39), do not outweigh the considerations, economic and political, which tend to make them mutually distrustful, if not hostile. Some of these considerations have already been indicated; and on their account “the understanding has arisen with France, and will be supported by the vast majority of voters in the United Kingdom, so long as it is not warped into unprovoked aggression on Germany to subserve Russian ambitions or the purely financial interests of France” (page 40).

Now, since the main objects of civilization are “the conquest of the Earth by science and the struggle to bring about universal happiness for man,” it is a matter for deep regret “that there should be any conflict of interests between Britain and Germany, any expensive duel in armatures.” Why then should their respective foreign policies clash? The answer to the query is found in the “German longing for political and colonial expansion.” Given this state of mind, arising naturally enough from German development during the last forty years (pages 40-43), the problem for Great Britain to ponder over is how she may assist, or at any rate not oppose, this outward growth, “in return for a cessation of menaced attacks on the independence of the Netherlands and of France, and consequently of the British Islands” (page 40).

“You may well be content,” is the German cry addressed to Great Britain, “for you have occupied or ear-marked such an enormous proportion of the earth’s surface that you do not need to talk of extension for three centuries to come.” *We* may have provided sufficient elbow-room for the next twenty years, but that is not sufficient. Instinctively we must fight for the future, or our memories will be reproached by our children and our children’s children.

This may be called “sentimental nonsense,” because it is uttered by Germans, and not by Englishmen. But we are the last of the powers who should laugh at such a yearning. Moreover, the Germans, after all, are

¹ Italics are the reviewer’s.

only expressing the Divine afflatus, the determination of the best type of white man to dominate the world. Germany is hatefully cramped within her present boundaries. . . . She is forbidden to approach nearer . . . towards the Channel or the Atlantic by the power of Great Britain. Such a prohibition is not insuperable, but to break it down might well ruin Germany financially, so that she would be too exhausted to make use of her victory when it was obtained [page 49].

The elements of an Anglo-German "reconciliation" lie, first, in certain readjustments of areas in southern Africa (page 43) which, incidentally, would enable Great Britain to have her long-projected Cape-to-Cairo railway and its possible branches run exclusively through British, French and Belgian territory, and command the heart of the continent (pages 46, 47). Elsewhere in Africa, also, in regions now belonging to France, Spain, Portugal and Belgium (page 45), Germany might be permitted to secure cessions by peaceful means; but so far as the Portuguese dominions are concerned, "Britain is quite unable," because of previous engagements on the subject, "to bargain for an Anglo-German understanding" (page 45), even if desirable in itself. Were Germany, however, to absorb all of the Belgian Congo, the action would be of "far less vital importance" to Great Britain than any direct attack by that power on Belgium proper (page 46).

The second element of Anglo-German reconciliation would assure to Germany "a sea outlet adequate to her desires." This would consist in a manifestation of the "goodwill of Austria *by the acquisition of Trieste*" (pages 49, 50). To be induced to make such a cession, of course, Austria "must receive compensation elsewhere, the more so as Italy would probably have to be won over to good-humour and compliance by obtaining at the same time the district of Trieste." That compensation, in turn, "can only lie in an eastward direction, in the Austrian Empire becoming more and more a great confederation of Southern Slavonic States in close alliance with Germany and Hungary" (page 50).

The transcendent changes that might follow in the wake of such a readjustment of conditions in the Near East are enough to hold one spell-bound in contemplating the extraordinary possibilities entailed. They concern, not eastern Europe so much, as the areas once or still belonging to the Ottoman Empire, regions doubtless the most famous in the entire annals of history, the scenes of a mighty panorama unfolding itself from the rise and fall of the Chaldean, the Egyptian, the Hittite, the Assyrian, the Babylonian, the Persian, the Macedonian,

the Roman and the Byzantine empires down to our own days. The vision had best be told in the author's words.

[The] satisfaction of Austrian ambitions in the Balkan Peninsula might lead to the satisfaction of German ambitions with regard to an outlet on the Mediterranean. This in its turn would enormously relieve the German pressure on Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg, and France, and pave the way for a complete understanding in future between Germany and France, and relieve the anxieties of Great Britain as to Germany's intention of becoming an Atlantic power. Austrian predominance as a kind of suzerain over the Balkan States to the north of Greece would indirectly benefit German trade. . . . The Turkish Sultanate would possibly not come to an end, but would henceforth, within certain limits, be directed and dominated by German councils. Germany in fact would become the power with the principal "say" as to the good government and economic development of Asia Minor. Syria might be constituted as a separate State under French protection, and Judæa be offered to the Jews under an international guarantee—to become in fact an Eastern Belgium. Sinai and Egypt would pass under avowed British protection, and Arabia (except the southern portion, which already lies within the British sphere of influence) be regarded as a federation of independent Arab States. For the rest, Turkey in Asia—less Armenia, which might be handed over to Russia—would, in fact, become to Germany what Egypt is to England—a kingdom to be educated, regenerated, and perhaps transfused and transformed by the renewed percolation of the Aryan Caucasian [*sic*]. Here would be a splendid outlet for the energies of both Germany and Austria, sufficient to keep them contented, busy, prosperous and happy, for at least a century ahead.

Who is going to object to such a settlement? Surely not Britain? The main opponent will be Russia [pages 50–51].

If, after receiving a number of compensatory allotments of territory from Austria, the Balkan countries should incline in their political friendships too much toward Russia, and this power should press her advantage, "then indeed there would be danger of a terrible struggle between Austria and Germany allied, on the one hand, and the Russian Empire on the other." In such a conflict "there is no doubt . . . as to the direction in which British sympathies should lie: with Austria-Germany" (page 55).

France, so long as she is unsatisfied on the subject of Lorraine, Luxemburg, and Belgium, might attempt, not only to join Russia in attacking Germany and Austria, but would seek to drag Great Britain after her into such a struggle, with the prospect of dismembering the German dominions in Europe and Asia. Any such intervention on our part would be a fatally

foolish act. It could not result in an eventual subjugation of Germany, Austria, or the allied Italy. The power that would gain most from any Anglo-French crippling of Germany, would be Russia. And most decidedly from the point of view of our ideals in liberty and civilisation, of our position in Asia, and our commerce with the eastern Mediterranean, any further westward accession of power to Russia would carry with it disastrous consequences. . . . And to see her established at Constantinople; still more, to leave Germany and Austria to be crushed between the French hammer and the Russian anvil, would be as bad a blow to the balance of power in Europe as was the unchecked supremacy of Napoleon.

In short: the affairs of the Balkan Peninsula to the north of the kingdom of Greece—a kingdom which as far as possible should be neutral like Belgium and Denmark—are no direct concern of the British Empire [pages 55-56].

This last assertion conceals one of the most extraordinary political readjustments of recent times. How fundamentally an international situation may become transformed in little more than a quarter of a century is a fact that it proclaims with a silence that is all too eloquent. Disraeli certainly would have marvelled and Bismarck would have stood amazed, could they have witnessed so complete a reversal of what each thought an ideal policy for his own time and people. Imagine Disraeli, the doughty comforter of the "Sick Man," now told by one of his countrymen that "the affairs of the Balkan Peninsula . . . are no direct concern of the British Empire"; and picture Bismarck, the grim champion of "reinsurance" with Russia, brought face to face with the grimmer logic of events today and yet declaring, as he did in 1879, that Germany has no concern in the Balkans which would justify it in risking "the sound bones of a single Pomeranian musketeer"!¹

Some "unreflecting readers of narrow outlook," resumes the author, may be shocked that he, "while fully alive to what perils there are in the German problem and in Prussian ambitions," should follow "numerous Polish, Austrian and even French publicists," so far as to "advocate the seeming strengthening of Germany by making her the leading state in a great Central European Confederation" (page 57). The reasons may be readily adduced.

If the Austro-Servian difficulty can be adjusted without positive injury to Austrian interests in the Balkan Peninsula, the resultant confederation of Central Europe will be a powerful counter-agent to future wars. As a

¹ Cf. *POLITICAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY*, vol. xxx, p. 46. Article by Professor Munroe Smith.

league for mutual defence, it will be too well endowed with men and money to be lightly attacked and vanquished ; as a confederation of free peoples of varied types, dispositions, languages, and modes of religious belief, it will be provided with a sufficient area of potential wealth and cultivable soil to be cured of wild ambitions and of aggressive policies against other leagues and empires. . . . And to Western Europe generally, this Central European Confederation would prove a welcome bulwark against the fast-increasing millions of Russians [pages 59-61].

The one danger which could menace our Empire would be the Russian occupation of Constantinople and Asia Minor, and the facilities such developments would give for a Russian descent on Syria and Egypt—Egypt, the wasp-waist of the British Empire. Since Turkey has absolutely no hope of durability or permanent strength, the only real bulwark against a Russianising of the Near East is the introduction of our brother Germans into Asia Minor and Mesopotamia (and perhaps French influence into Syria) to restore the remains of the Byzantine Empire to Western civilisation. . . . [The Russians] must, in all conscience, with an Empire already amounting to nearly 9,000,000 square miles, leave Central and Southeastern Europe alone, and allow other European nations the honor and the profit of restoring the dominions of Alexander and Justinian to the civilisation of Greece and Rome [pages 73-74].

On the supposition that the Germans may choose to recast their Empire, by reducing the number of states and by dividing "the overwhelmingly large proportion of Prussian territory into subsidiary kingdoms and duchies under Hohenzollern princes," this circumstance, added to the part Germany would take in the new "Central European Confederation," might have very happy consequences. In the author's opinion, "there would be no longer the restless discontent and the half-insane desire for war which characterizes the vocal and the voting classes in Prussia today, well typified as they are by the writings of General von Bernhardi" (pages 60-61).

Regarding this last assertion, out of justice, not to the German viewpoint merely, but to that of all who believe that the time for dispensing with naval and military force, as determining ultimately the relationship of nations, will not have arrived with the close of the present war, two important questions might be raised. In the first place, were the utterances of the officer mentioned, and of others of his kind, really so influential in Germany itself as Sir Harry Johnston implies, and were they not better known, perhaps, in Great Britain than in the land of their origin? Secondly, if they were actually influential to that or even to a greater extent, were they quite so pernicious or undesirable as he appears to think? In order to answer these ques-

tions, countries other than Germany and Great Britain should be drawn into the discussion.

According to an abundance of reliable German testimony on the subject, "Bernhardian bellicosity," assuming it to have been so dreadful a thing, was little, if any, more influential on the great mass of the population than were the jingoistic vaporings of Murray and the *Daily Mail* on the British people, of Boucher and *Le Petit Journal* on the French, or of Homer Lea and *The Evening Telegram* on the American, as ascertained from similar sources among the three peoples concerned. Sensationalism of the "sabre-rattling" or "lion-roaring," or even the "spread-eagle" variety, is not a product altogether "made in Germany." In Germany's case, moreover, there was some reason at least why Bernhardt and his colleagues might have a hearing. To the eastward lay the constant menace of Russia—the retiring habits of which were not so well known then as they are now—a huge mass of land and people terrible because of their very immensity and vagueness. Germany was becoming rapidly an industrial and commercial country, liable to sacrifice its agricultural interests to manufacturing, and hence to make itself dangerously dependent upon outside sources for its food supplies. Any relaxation of vigilance, of habits of discipline, obedience, orderliness and systematic coöperation, suggested, if not bred, by military training, the insidious spread of a spirit of commercialism setting personal gain over devotion to the Fatherland and its institutions, might afford an opportunity for Russia, aided by France because of motives of "*revanche*," or because of her rôle of creditor, to realize the dream of the Muscovite—the seizure of the road to Constantinople that lay through Berlin and Vienna—and thus incidentally to injure or destroy whatever the German might hold dear—call it "Kultur" or anything else.

In this connection is it unreasonable to ask whether several of the suppositions mentioned in the case of Germany might not have some bearing, *mutatis mutandis*, upon the respective international situations of Great Britain, France and the United States? From the individual standpoints of the first two countries, as illustrated during the present conflict, the answer is obvious. The geographical location of the United States, on the other hand, the sole power of great importance on the American continents, and a variety of additional circumstances, into an examination of which it is not necessary here to enter, might seem to indicate the probability of a perennial enjoyment of immunity from attack by envious or resentful, or simply meddling, fellow nations. But whether the American people ought to regard their situa-

tion as one of true, or one of false, security is something for "past and current" history, but not hysteria, "hyphenophobe" or otherwise, to teach them.

Returning to the text—so far as Russia in particular comes into a common-sense adjustment in foreign policy, a satisfactory compensation for loss of territory, or relinquishment of territorial ambitions, in Europe could be obtained by assuring to her naval and mercantile marine freedom of access from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, and to that of other nations similar access in a reverse direction (page 71), and also by certain acquisitions and rearrangements in Asia. To gratify her legitimate desire for a "warm-water port," a strip of land in western Persia, stretching from the Caucasian frontier on the north down to the Persian Gulf, might be secured, through which a railway could be built. This would entail a relinquishment on the part of Great Britain and Russia of the spheres of influence they now hold in Persia as a result of the unfortunate delimitation, or better partition, of 1907. Furthermore, through ridding that country of foreign influence, the readjustment in question would hasten the "eventual regeneration and civilisation of Persia" (page 66).

To the eastward, China could have the "*beau rôle* of the unselfish State" to play, one similar—in a highly peculiar sense—to that of Austria in Europe (page 58). If Russian losses to the westward are to be repaired in such a way as to keep Christian nations, and their insular colleague not of that faith, peaceably disposed to one another and to China herself, she has simply to turn over to Russia certain territories in the north which the latter ought to have, or eventually will get (page 97)—unless China learns betimes to object in approved European and Japanese fashion. She would "probably be wise," however, "in allowing those regions to come under Russian protection, since the indigenous peoples are much more nearly related to the races and tribes of Russian Asia and have frequently rebelled against Chinese rule" (page 95). Doubtless, also, "a good deal of South-west Manchuria will be added eventually to the Japanese Empire with some satisfaction to China"—consisting in a restoration of part of her own territory! (page 67).

But if Russia were to annex any part of "China Proper," were she to extend her political influence to Tibet, or her conquests of Persia in an easterly or southerly direction, threatening India, and "push through Finland to the north coast of Norway and establish herself on the shores of the Atlantic," she "might come so seriously into conflict with British interests, that warfare would ensue, or, at any rate, a very unfriendly

attitude be forced upon" Great Britain, (pages 67, 68). Finland, in fact, is a country on behalf of which "British sympathies may some day be invoked." Because of their affiliation with Sweden, the western and northern portions of the province ought eventually to become independent and then "a self-governing member of the Scandinavian Confederation." "But the ultimate settlement . . . of the Finnish question is one which . . . draws Sweden towards an understanding with Germany, for, if Germany and Austria were forced into war with Russia, the temptation to the Swedes would then be very strong to get the question of Finland settled" (page 69, 70).

"Britain and America" is a topic, finally, that does not loom especially large on the horizon of *Common Sense in Foreign Policy*, occupying, as it does, only about one-twentieth of the bulk of the book, with a few references scattered through other pages. What is vouchsafed, however, has to do chiefly with the tenth on the list of the "only things worth fighting for," so far as the United States is immediately concerned.¹ "The greatest blunder which British foreign policy has committed in regard to America since the Napoleonic wars," remarks the author, "was the abandonment of our legitimate interests on the eastern coast of Central America" (page 88). Whatever concessions Great Britain made, in the middle of the last century, to certain republics in that area were granted "with the idea, not only of conciliating the United States, but of encouraging that growing Power to consider herself bound by the famous Clayton-Bulwer treaty never to acquire territory or exclusive influence in any part of Central America" (page 89).

On this point it should be remembered that the treaty in question was observed by the United States only "as long as it was convenient." The conduct of that country, indeed, ten years after Great Britain had consented to replace the Clayton-Bulwer stipulations by the Hay-Pauncefote arrangement, affords ample proof that, as a general proposition, treaties "only bind the polity of the United States as long as they are convenient." Anticipating, as it were, a somewhat celebrated allusion on the part of the German Chancellor to the stuff of which treaties may be made, the author observes that, in the case of the great American republic, they "are not, really, worth the labor their negotiation entails or the paper they are written on. It is well," therefore, "that this position should be realized" by other nations, "as it may save a great deal of fuss and disappointment in the future" (page 89).

¹ See above, p. 129.

This frank statement, however, must not be construed to mean that the United States is

at all inimical towards Great Britain. This union of fifty [?] English-speaking, self-governing communities . . . tends towards an informal alliance with Great Britain, an alliance springing from a deep-seated community of interests and the strongest of all bonds—a common language. But such an alliance will never be written down, nor will it ever be possible to force the United States to do anything it does not wish to do, even to the keeping of its pledged word. But so long as we remain a free-trade country, it is altogether to the interests of the United States that we shall hold a very high and authoritative place in the councils of Europe. And if the United Kingdom were ever in serious danger from a hostile European coalition, it is a prophecy almost certain of fulfillment that a fleet would sail from the United States to her rescue [pages 89-90].

Right here two quotations from other parts of the book might have a certain appropriateness. One is: "German soldiers were employed by us in our American war of 1775-83. Their introduction was the commencement of the wonderful Germanisation of the United States which is a telling force in world-politics today" (page 38). The other is: "The Germans . . . who go to North America . . . cease to be German subjects either in themselves or by their descendants. They become in course of time foreigners—and foreigners extraordinarily patriotic towards the Flag of their adopted country" (page 49). Sir Harry Johnston, of course, is wrong about the historical origin of the "Germanisation" of the United States; and he is probably wrong, also, in his earlier assumption about the readiness with which an American fleet would sail to Great Britain's aid under the circumstances cited. The patriotism of American citizens of German and of other descent, reinforced by a suitable amount of common sense, in all likelihood, would keep the American ship of state safe and sound in American waters where it belongs.

Sir Harry Johnston, indeed, is himself not altogether sure that the relations between Great Britain and the United States will continue amicable, even aside from the matter of help in extricating the former from European complications.

The one requirement necessary for our peace of mind in regard to . . . [the larger islands of the West Indies, Mexico and Central America] is that the United States shall not extend a Protectionist, preferential policy across its present borders, if it should feel obliged to assume political control over any part of Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, [Salva-

dor, Panama,] or Costa Rica. If the States maintain a fair field and no favour for all law-abiding persons who come thither for trade and industry, then, not only Great Britain, but the world at large will be grateful to the United States for intervening (if need be) to save [the several areas in question from their] chaotic political conditions. . . .

South America, on the other hand, lies possibly for all time beyond the direct tutelage of the Anglo-Saxon, or at any rate of the Anglo-Saxon as typified by the Government of the United States [pages 90-91].

A further attempt on the part of the United States to arrogate to itself a privileged position in the commerce of Central and, still more, South America, similar to the fiscal policy it has imposed on Cuba, would be resisted so emphatically by a European and Japanese alliance [quite apart from German interests in the matter] that the United States would be defeated [page 41].

Such in general are the themes discussed in this remarkable work. Throughout the emphasis is laid upon three essential things. These are, first, the observance of a tolerant attitude on the part of "white nations" toward the justifiable ambitions of one another; second, the determination of possible readjustments among them of territory; and, third, a maintenance of the free-trade or moderate tariff principle within the areas where it now prevails. Regard for them would constitute the surest guaranty for the preservation of international peace. A trifle repetitious and desultory though the text of the little book may be, once in a while even falling into error, it remains, nevertheless, a frank, fair, honest and ingenuous presentation, from a British standpoint, of the opinions of a man who knows much whereof he speaks. It deserves careful reading by all desirous to learn how the present war might have been avoided, and how a disregard of many a fruitful suggestion it contains is responsible for Armageddon.

WILLIAM R. SHEPHERD.